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Some Reflections on the Economic and Political Organisation of Private Neighbourhoods

Georg Glasze

Pages 221-233 | Received 01 Nov 2003, Published online: 22 Aug 2006

Cite this article https://doi.org/10.1080/02673030342000331745

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Abstract

The spreading of privately organised and often gated neighbourhoods in many regions of the world has triggered a widespread discussion about the relations between social and urban development. This paper presents some reflections on the economic and political organisation of this type of housing. First, the club goods theory is used to explain the potential attractiveness of this form of housing for developers, local governments as well as residents. However, the club goods theory alone does not enable one to understand the global but regionally differentiated development. Therefore, second, this paper proposes to view the analysis of private neighbourhoods as club economies against the background of historically and regionally differentiated patterns of urban governance which render urban development path-dependent. Third, in order to evaluate the political and social consequences, the private neighbourhoods

are analysed as a new form of political organisation and are compared with a territorial organisation with public municipalities.

Keywords:

Private neighbourhoods | urban governance | territorial club economics

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